UNITY.

FREEDOM, FELLOWSHIP AND CHARACTER IN RELIGION.

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UNITY NOTWITHSTANDING.

A recent address of T. P. Sawin, of Janesville, before the County Bible Society, deserves our praise so far as it maintains the excellence of the Bible. But when he goes out of his way to assail the books revered in other religions, we must reply in the name of truth, humanity and *unity*. Among others the "Chinese Classics," Mr. Sawin says, "are destined to be as the grass that withereth and the flower that fadeth," and have already been found "only as a bruised reed and a broken staff." But, considering that these "classics" are far older than Christianity, and, after more than two thousand years, are read and revered as much as ever, we should say they have withered and faded less than even the Westminster Confession of Faith. They may not be used in our Sunday Schools; but considering how they are read, studied and learned, made the very basis of education, government and life, among so many millions of people, we ought not yet to call them "a bruised reed" and "a broken staff."

Scholars agree, too, about the high moral standard and purity of these books. Says Samuel Johnson, speaking of China: "No nation in the world, of whatever religion, possesses a literature so pure. It has been said there is not a single sentence in the whole of the classical books, nor in their annotations, that may not, when translated word for word, be read aloud with propriety in any family in England." Some preachers do not dare read all their own "word of God" to their congregations so freely as that. We would not, of course, ask Mr. Sawin to read the "Chinese Classics" from his pulpit, or ever to read them himself; we only ask him not to abuse them.

A work is to be judged for "what it has done for the race," says Mr. Sawin, and adds: "Go ask China what Confucius has done for her." China would answer Mr. Sawin that Confucius has done a great deal for her. He may not have given her the beauties of the Thirty-nine Articles, or the perfections of the Congregational Church. But he, more than any other, has given her that stability and permanence which no other civilization has yet shown. The man whose maxims have for 2000 years done so much to hold that vast and crowded population—of heathens, too—in a general peace and order, and in a morality which Christian travelers have been forced to praise, ought not to be accused of having done nothing for the race.

"If Jesus is no better than Socrates, or Confucius, or Gautama, he will soon be hidden in as great obscurity as they are," says Mr. Sawin. We have no fears that Jesus will ever be forgotten, and are confirmed in that faith when we see that these other great and good men before him are not yet forgotten. Confucius may be in "great obscurity" in certain churches in Janesville; but in Pekin and Canton, and Tientsin and Han-Chau, and several other Chinese cities which count their inhabitants by the hundred thousand, and could swallow Janesville without feeling it,—Confucius is a famous and honored name, and his sayings are household words. Gautama is doubtless in "great obscurity" in the Rock County Bible Society; but he is still revered as half divine by more millions than Christianity numbers. And "The Light of Asia" now comes as a classic, and bids fair to extend his fame through England and America. The "great obscurity" in which Mr. Sawin says these names are hidden, is seen only by those who do not see far.

We want a religion which, while valuing its own names and methods, is just to those of others. Such a religion is growing, too; even orthodoxy is everywhere broadening. In happy contrast with the words we have quoted, *Unity* is glad to print the following from the Methodist Dr. Thomas' last sermon:

"The translation of the literature of Egypt and China is opening the door to those ancient and distant worlds of thought. The press brings it to our homes. The press is making common the thought of all schools and all creeds. And by travel and reading the nations of the earth are coming to know each other, and knowing each other to see more clearly the good that is common to all. There is coming to be felt more of a universal sympathy, a sense of brotherhood, a sense of general justice, of what is due to man as man. Humanity is coming to know the broad life of its kind, and its voice is lifted up in protests against any great public wrong as never before. The immense journalism of our age keeps the world, in a broad sense, before us all the time.

The press waits at the door of kings and cabinets to catch even the whispered secrets of governments; it follows Livingstone and Stanley into Africa; it goes with Grant around the world. When a patriot suffers in any land the word is quickly flashed over the earth. When conscience is any where oppressed, or martyrs cast into prison, or a bridle put upon free speech, it is quickly told to all the race. Thus we are in a world of sympathetic emotion. Great waves of feeling go round the earth like currents of air or the tides of the sea. These things are making us one.

"Under all these educating influences mankind are coming to look for broader and truer foundations for the state. They are seeing the waste of war, and are asking how shall the world have peace? The voices of the poor, and the ignorant, and the oppressed are sounding in the ears of kings and courts, and need no longer be unheeded. In matters of religion also, mankind are searching for broader foundations of fellowship. The enthusiasm of mere sectarianism is every year growing less and less. The deep and enduring enthusiasm of religion must rest upon the few great and acknowledged truths of God and immortality, on which there can be a general agreement; and upon the settled principles of a morality whose value is acknowledged by all. Religion is to become more and more an experience of the heart, and a life of love to God and man. The day is not distant when the little differences over which the churches have quarreled and separated will be forgotten in the larger debate that is upon us, of matter, or God; of dust, or immortality; and in the pressing need for workers in the fields already white to the harvest. Thus shall the lesser divisions among men be lost in larger thoughts and nobler deeds."

CHURCH OUTSIDERS.

R. L. H.

"God hath showed me that I should not call
Any man common or unclean."—*Peter.*

We rejoice in the growing light that shows the folly of caste, and shames the arrogant sanctimoniousness of some people. We are glad that the day is growing brighter, in which it becomes plain that God and goodness cannot be confined within any circle called a church, and that no company of people can monopolize the favor of God and human salvation. It is evident that many of the most thoughtful people—the most pure in heart, irreproachable in conduct—and those that have done most to enlighten and improve mankind in every age, have never been church members, or have been excommunicated from the most popular churches of their time. Even Jesus himself was a church outsider. It is plain also that thousands of very intelligent and lovely people in our land never or seldom go to any church. It may be safely said that even in the best towns and communities in our country, not half the people go to any church.

Those of us who love churches are sorry for this; for it seems to us that all men and women need all the social and religious helps possible to keep them awake concerning the higher things of humanity. We need to come together often for reflection and meditation, and to have the purest thoughts and tenderest feelings stirred within us, and to have our religious hunger fed. And the sacred music, and social prayers, and appeals from pulpits to our reason and affection, and the heart-touches we have in coming together within churches, seem to us so helpful, until we wonder sometimes that so many dear people do not come to these blessed soul feasts. We cannot help asking,

WHY DO THEY NOT COME TO CHURCH?

And when we enquire and consider, we find some of the reasons why in the churches, and other reasons in the outsiders. Many people have no interest in going to church, because so many churches cling to dogmas and customs that cannot be heartily respected by thoughtful men and woman in the light of the present day. Such unreasonable things are taught in so many churches, until many thinking people are disgusted with them, and know well that even the preachers themselves do not half believe what they say. According to the most common teachings in the churches, religion seems so unnatural and so nonsensical to many people, that they get tired of such stuff, and will not go to hear it. Churches also very often get into great debts foolishly, so as to make many sensible, economical people keep away from them. Too much pride and coldness in churches are often good reasons why many people do not want to go near them. In some churches the preaching is so desperately dull, and the music so unnatural and poor, until it is no wonder that people of any good taste stay away from them.

But again, thousands of people are church outsiders on account of their own faults and defects.

Even in communities where there are churches out of debt, everything in them attractive and comfortable, the preaching reasonable and soul-stirring, the welcome warm and cordial, and the expenses very moderate, yet hundreds of people who have nothing against such churches, never go near them. O, what an indifference we find in many dear people concerning any and every church interest! There are enough liberal people almost in every small town in our country to sustain a good large Liberal Church, if those people could only be interested sufficiently to attend such a church. But now they refuse to be so interested. O, that somebody could tell us

WHAT IS BEST TO DO

in relation to these numerous outsiders?

The best that this writer can suggest are these

means: Liberal religious people should try to get acquainted with these many church outsiders, and understand why they stay out of churches. Also meet these outsiders on the common ground of humanity, cease to say anything about sects and dogmas, care nothing about Unitarianism or Universalism, or any other ism in the world; try to gather them together to arouse them about the live issues of to-day, concerning moral things and religious interests; try to have the most stirring, plain and practical preaching possible, and also the good religious singing that stirs the hearts of common people. We should also try to plan some noble, good things *to do* in our religious assemblies, and go after the people who will not first come to us. Every effort to magnify our ism, every high, scholarly, dry preaching, every polished talk that has nothing in it to touch common souls, every aristocratic air, every spirit of caste, every assumption of proud holiness, every disposition to be extravagant in foolish expenditures, should be avoided as much as possible in churches. And it seems that Liberal preachers should go out to hold protracted meetings, and have good Sankeys to sing religious reasonable things to stir the popular heart. Why cannot Liberals have crowds to hear them by talking and singing sense, as others have by talking and singing nonsense to people? There is a way to make liberal, reasonable religious things more attractive to many people. If a dozen live, evangelists could use their best Liberal thoughts in a popular way—come down from their metaphysical clouds and have some hearty good singers with them—they might reach thousands of outsiders and do much good in many communities where there are many people who never go to church.

OPTIMISM AND PESSIMISM.

R. A. GRIFFIN.

The one is the testimony of fortune, the other of misfortune. Both alike are human voices. Each philosophy is as rational as the other; both alike are the testimonies of experience. The one cannot abolish the other permanently, any more than the day can abolish the night. Optimism is the monument of human happiness, Pessimism of human misery. They are the rival and co-existent states known as Hope and Despair, dialectically stated. All men pass from one view of life to the other, although those who have professed optimism are slow to confess their pessimistic conclusions. Moreover, the latter is usually in the ascendant when men are secluded by sorrows and pains. It is too sad a view for the humane to publish hastily; too sad, however true, to be reflected on when happiness returns. Moreover, the public are generally composed of the healthy and vigorous; it may correspond to their experience, but it does not suit their mood. Man has a way of stealing his own tears from his eyes, and smiling to conceal the theft. The crowd—some coming from the fresh graves of their lovely little children, others from the sick-bed of wife or friend, others from a ruined business, some with gnawing hunger or depraved thirst or shrunken limbs, others with hate burning within them, or the sense of injury rankling in their hearts—vote the straight ticket of optimism because it's more pleasant to support happiness than proclaim misery. Poor human nature sees no harm in concealing its sad experience, any more than Nature sees harm in clothing the bog with verdure. Moreover, lean and shrinking Pessimism is stared out of countenance by most scholars of brilliant intellect, pen in hand; by most men of robust health, by all the beauty of youth, by all the splendors of high station, and the majesty of all manhood in its high-noon mood. Yet in spite of its silence and shrinking, it is a true statement of what man thinks of the world. It has as much right to be heard; it is uttered with as emphatic connection as any other. Those scholars who tauntingly said, "Go to! you are sick; your philosophy is a symptom of disease," —they in turn come into the very mood they scorned, and confess, "Before I was afflicted I went astray. Mine was the jaunty conclusion, the self-complaisant view of prosperity. I said, 'My comedy was the world's life;' I say now my life partakes of the universal tragedy. I was like the rich man who said, 'Soul, take thine ease; eat, drink and be merry.' I am beneath the shadow of the cross, and my heart echoes at once the agony of Jesus and the world, and feels there is more manhood in the awful 'Eloi' than in all the hopeful views of brighter days."

The literature of pessimism is largely unwritten; it is too deep for words, too serious and sad to rise into verbal poetry. The pessimist who can write is dealing in reminiscences; he is not immediately inspired by present emotion and condition. The agony is past when we can appropriately speak of it in measured terms. Let us indulge no sneer at it; let us not turn a deaf ear to a voice which is seldom heard speaking aloud. It may be due to imperfect vision; it may pass away; the glory of the Lord may yet be revealed to all flesh; meanwhile in every heart at some time it has endorse-

ment, and in many whole lives it is the only view possible.

This suffering world can find no help in self-satisfied venturers, who cry, "All pillows are safe," because no thorns are in their own. The full stomach cannot argue for the empty one; Dives cannot be the mouthpiece of Lazarus; wealth cannot do the thinking of poverty.

The Man of Sorrows is the Savior of the world. We must bear one another's burdens, not make out they are light. It is idle to cry, "This is the best possible world," while every wind brings the taint of battle fields, and every procession has its loads of cripples. It is idle to sing songs to drown the world's groans, and hide its graves with flowers. The true apostolate is that which is inspired by the highest hopes, while keenly conscious of the general despair; which cries, "Yes, this is a sad world, —now let us labor to turn its sorrows into discipline, so that if we fail of happiness, we may attain virtue."

FELLOWSHIP.

J. V. B.

Fellowship is like a Persian hanging-garden, a rich and blooming thing raised high into the pure air. One of the strong pillars that bear it is Justice. I must remember that, in whatever way my friend appears to me, I am myself, in part, the cause of that appearance, and do, so to speak, supply the light by which I see him. It by no means follows that a person is dull and dry because he seems so to me. His stupidity may be a compound of which I am one element, as, chemically, an acid and an alkali, both very lively alone, may combine into a neutral and inert body. Emerson says, "All conversation is a magnetic experiment. I know that my friend can talk eloquently; you know that he cannot articulate a sentence; we have seen him in different company." A fine story is told of Calvin Fletcher, a wise old lawyer of Indianapolis. He said: "If I do business with any one, and he gets angry at me or does not act right, it is my fault. My business is to see that every one with whom I do business shall do right. I charge myself with that responsibility." The justification of that maxim is found in the blissful visions it calls up immediately. Certainly if it were once the conviction of men that they themselves may be blameworthy for others' faults, we should go no longer repeating the poet's dream of a golden age to come, or the Christian's hope of the millenium. Already the advent would have happened. An obvious application is to parents. How well would it be for children and for all the world, if the fathers and mothers would blame themselves for the faults that appear, so as to begin the reform where the fountain of influence is! I heard a good man say, "My chief perplexity with my child's fault is that I always feel so guilty of it."

Thomas Hughes has written a book, soon to be published, on "The Manliness of Christ." John Morley's "Life of Cobden" is to appear about the beginning of the year.

OCCUPATIONS OF OLD AGE.

MRS. MARY E. BAGG.

Midway between life's afternoon and "the night which cometh in which no man can work," and more or less extended, lies the twilight of old age. The thrifty and forehanded provide for this twilight such employment as does not call for the strength and brightness of high noon. Appropriate for this season is that work which pleasantly busies without wearying, and which satisfies as being worth the doing. But it cannot be picked up like a half-knitted stocking when night is closing in. The occupation for these hours must be planned during the busy day. A healthy, useful and happy old age is the outcome of a life's forethought.

Besides the occupations, my subject rightly includes the pleasures of old age.

Aside from what we may *believe*, we only *know* that the present is ours; and, assuming that happiness is the end of life, it would be well to learn early that "Love is Lord and King of all." A lady of eighty, on being asked how she kept herself so young and cheery, replied, "I love everybody, and I believe everybody loves me." Again, it was remarked of a very unattractive girl, who suddenly became more lovable, that she had "experienced religion." Not so: she had experienced love—had become enamored of something outside herself that brought her into new and friendly relations to the universe. This love for all keeps the spirit alive and fresh and happy. She who studies flowers or stars or the humanities, is moved by a force making toward the heart of things—a force that keeps on, whose work is never finished, and whose results, in utilities and happiness, dwarf the transient excitements of weddings, funerals or scandals.

It is right that one's own kind should claim the first place in our regard, and an interest in their evolutions is legitimate, if the observer be not content with phenomena merely, but, behind the spectacle, studies the forces acting on temperament, and measures their effects as revealed in tricks of manner, in accent, conduct, character. A lively interest in all things lets no opportunity escape for the acquirement of a science, art, accomplishment or idea. It might be desirable to know *all* thoroughly; but life being too short for such a work, it is well to possess even a little knowledge of many things, of the natural sciences, of music, drawing, languages, literature, art, the domestic economies, and the thousand and one arts of the needle. If to this be added superior excellence in any one pursuit, the equipment for old age may be considered sufficient. To be rich in head-crafts and handicrafts, and alert in adjusting one's-self to contingencies, is to insure independence in the vigor of life and variety of interest during its decline. If the life love be *all* for jellies, cross-stitch or Kensington, or all for the divine harmonies, equally bereft will old age and rheumatism find the possessor of *one* resource. The unforeseen is forever surprising us, and the many-sided only are ready for its

appearing. It is hard to lame a centipede or to bind a Briareus, and the ambidextrous shall not stay his hand for an accident.

The aims of this association being eminently practical, may not be fully met save by a bill of particulars, enumerating some of the desirable and feasible preparations for length of years.

No full life is possible and no long life desirable without a balanced cultivation of powers of brain, heart and hand. The work of each is equally honorable when justified by times and conditions. She who, in the strength of her maturity, observes the transit of Venus, is demeaned when, at eighty, she finds amusement in a six-penny calico arrangement of an impossible solar system.

Teach the eye to see, the ear to hear, the hand to execute, the lips to speak fittingly the well-conconsidered thought of the brain. Train the memory to hold fast all that is admirable in book, picture, landscape, museum; and to the end that the best only shall be retained, resolutely decline to read, see or hear aught but the best that may be accessible.

Cultivate intimacy with each succeeding generation, and a sympathy with its thought and purpose. So far as may be, keep abreast of your children in their studies; so shall your intellectual companionship with them remain unbroken, and your thought have weight with them and be quickened by the newer thought of the hour.

Cherish a candor of mind that shall make you tolerant of the opinions of others; remembering that while the domain of knowledge is circumscribed, that of opinion is boundless, and that all have equal right to exercise the imagination in building theories. A wise discrimination between opinion and knowledge will prevent heated arguments about imaginings, which tend to abate kindly feeling. Must you love your friend the less because her heaven is not built after your plan? It is a great art to hold cordial relations with all genuine well-intentioned people, looking away from their unlovely traits, their egotisms and faults of manner. Bigotry and prejudice would, in the course of years, dismiss every true, courageous, frank friend.

It is wise to note carefully what is admirable and attractive in the aged, and also to be warned against all that is repellant.

A conscientious care of the body is duty as well as policy, and it is a sin and an imposition to lapse into unnecessary invalidism. Women should be familiar with the laws of health – should know something of sanitary science, and have a practical acquaintance with the duties of the sick-room.

As great a duty, and one too often neglected, is the exercise of such economy during the whole of life as shall insure a provision for its years of helplessness. Every woman should understand the bearing of the business transactions in which she has taken a part, and the force of every paper she is called upon to sign.

There is nothing in her physique that forbids her carrying in wood or handling tools which require skill rather than strength. In the use of all feminine implements she should be expert, and boys as well as girls should be taught to use the needles for sewing, crocheting, netting, knitting, etc. Embroidery and fancy work have their value, and are entitled to their place as recreations and educators of the artistic taste. It is quite worth while to learn straw braiding and the weaving of Saratoga baskets and husk mats, in preparation for impaired sight.

A diary kept through life is an interesting resource in its later years. Besides matters of greater moment, it should contain mention of notable entertainments, lectures, journeys, people, works of art, your children's wise sayings or cunning doings. It should give the titles of books read, garments made and other work done, besides a cash account.

Scraps of poetry or prose that at the time seem of worth or in accord with the taste, should be dated and preserved. In the passage of years, these will give the history of the growth of mind, changes of taste and opinion, and serve as milestones to mark the standpoint at every stage of progress. A pencil and paper, carried always in the pocket, will enable you to preserve for the note-book your own bright and ingenious thoughts, beautiful similes or poetic phrasings.

It may be asked, "How can time be found for all these labors?" It is said, "The gods *sell* all things at a fair price." In this age, it is folly to expect something for nothing, and no miracles are wrought for the idle. A price must be paid for every attainment. Few are so favored that, while indulging their special tastes, they can delegate to others the less congenial work that clamors to be done. To the greater number who, in following the love of the heart, must sacrifice largely in other directions, I address myself.

Is it your aim, above all else, to be a perfect housekeeper, notable for desserts and salads, and gathering and caring for over-much stores of linen, china, silver and upholsteries? The price you must pay is, the ability to read understandingly a scientific book or to enjoy a thoughtful one. Is it difficult to prophesy the weary, empty years that wait for her who has spent her life in much serving?

Do you aspire to be a leader of fashion? Be sure the time will come when your children will know more than you, and you will become painfully conscious that the respect and love they may show will be for the mother, not for the instructor, guide and companion. At seventy, will you approve the aspiration of your youth? Do your sympathies prompt to a devotion to works of benevolence? would you be a power in the philanthropic world and always on a committee? The price demanded is, more or less neglect of home and children, a closed piano, a disused pencil and unread books.

Is your ambition centered in rag carpets, butter and cheese, embroidered lambrequins and crocheted shawls? Before your hair is gray you shall have countless premiums from State Fairs, a lack-lustre eye, a vacant mind, dull evenings, nothing to say worth the saying; while old age with palsied hand shall be for you a time of idle, tedious waiting. Would you dedicate your time and powers to literary work? Then you must give up fashion and philanthropy and household accomplishments;

and when the tired brain rests from its labors, what remains but the untrained, useless hand?

No goods will be exchanged; wailing will not prevail with the gods. Do you mourn that you cannot name the stars? Remember, you preferred to know how many eyelets go to a scallop on a baby's skirt.

When from stress of circumstances one is forced to spend her energies in distasteful work, the spirit of cheerful self-surrender is to be admired and will be rewarded in its own way, but none the less is it to be regretted that such sacrifice is necessary; and when after the heat of the day the burden drops, the consciousness will remain that with leisure has come incapacity to do the work she loved and for which she was best fitted. The children must have bread though it bring the race-horse to the plough, and the house must be swept though poets remain dumb, and clothes must be mended though the pen be idle. Stern duty compels, but something deep in the patient heart whispers, "drudging, too, is heroic, and every grace is timely, while expectation is immortal."

Too much we belong to our belongings, and more or less we sell ourselves to the luxuries we buy. Diamonds, marbles, fragile bric-a-brac and expensive wardrobes cost, in time and care, what the wise will not pay. The time saved by the use of cretonne instead of plush, would serve to acquaint you with a science, or a language, or enable you to supervise your children's music and keep up your own. Wood floors, mosaic, stained or painted, in place of carpets, would secure hours enough to keep you well informed of discoveries in the realms of science, mechanics and philosophy, or make it possible for you to go in thought with every explorer into every penetrable portion of the globe. The time spent in elaborate frillings and trimmings would familiarize you with the history of a nation or an art; and the money saved from costly entertainments to the "dear five hundred," would afford you an occasional journey to some Mecca of nature or of art.

A baby may be lulled to sleep as well by reading aloud as by crooning "Mother Goose." When knitting is learned early, the mittens and stockings will grow while you are entertained by the club book. It is well to keep a book of gems in the work-basket, another on the kitchen shelf, and one in the chamber. While patching the clothes, or shelling the peas, or dusting the furniture, you may be strengthened, comforted or informed by a word from some sacred book, or from Epictetus, Marcus Antonius, Emerson, Thomas a' Kempis, Runes of Freedom. Of healing and of power shalt thou know incantations that shall make the day safe and rich.

The woman who finds herself sleepy and nervous in the evening home-circle, may be sure that duty calls for an afternoon nap or rest. If she can neither enjoy nor entertain, all are defrauded. When her husband ceases to read aloud the book or paper, ceases to call out her comment, she insensibly falls behind him mentally, and in the moving years this "lapsing from his side" tells grievously in divergence of thought, taste and sympathies. The resolute and economical will use all the odds and ends of time to compass the desirable, and the habit of industry tells day by day in steady gains.

I think that all that has been proposed is attainable by persons of average mental ability, fair health and firm resolves. Such have lived. Many names might be cited of *famous* women, who have brought much to pass in their failing years; but inasmuch as it is given to but few to be *famous*, I will name instead some whose accomplishments are more within the capabilities of the average American woman. I call to mind one whose literary labors are of recognized worth, who at the age of seventy, in total blindness, knitted in one year thirty pairs of stockings; and when returning vision made it possible, resumed her studies in natural science with strengthened interest. Another highly educated lady, at seventy-five, conducted conversations in French and published a book of valuable recipes. And one, whose means would not permit her to buy material for her industries, and whose loss of hearing compelled her to live within herself, found pleasure in doing for others. At eighty-five she cut and basted, in one year, two bushels of patch-work for sewing schools. And still another, of queenly bearing and gracious accomplishments, though prisoned in her room and far down the hill of life, for years has kept the little feet in an orphan asylum well covered by the work that was her amusement. In love and honor I would pay a tribute to her whose purblind eyes refused to guide the obedient pencil, and who turned to household offices, discoursing meanwhile of art, literature, philosophy, of nature and her interior meanings. And there comes to mind the picture of a gentle, soft-spoken woman sitting among the geraniums she could not see, who, working at her trade of umbrella making, was for thirty years equal bread-winner with the abler members of her family. And still another, who with cunning hand upon the organ's keys, until the age of eighty, led chant and anthem in her village church. I must speak, too, of one whose culture of mind and heart adorned and glorified her sick-room, from whence for twenty years she guided and controlled a benevolent institution, and this, too, in the waning years of life.

The ideal old lady is everything I have hinted, and something more. With a fair acquaintance with many arts, in her specialties she rises above mediocrity, when taste, talent and occasion favor. She esteems every useful employment compatible with dignity, and to be preferred to ennui. So far as may be she is independent of the service of others, holding it "elegant to answer one's own need." She enjoys games, grown up or juvenile, can tell a riddle or a fairy story, is well up in modern rebusses, charades and puzzles, and when alone can find solace in solitaire. She is curious about Herbert Spencer's "Data of Ethics," and shares "St. Nicholas" with little Toddlekins. She criticises her grandson's thesis, and is glad to learn a new way of knitting baby's socks. She studies the mechanism of the phonograph, is learned in

lace stitches and cat's cradle, and to oblige will take a hand at croquet. She can give the Mother's Club her method with children who hold their breath, or she can advise in building a house of blocks. She delights to tell how plants grow, how butterflies come, how they wove tape and bobbin in the old time. She can cover a ball, or model a kite, or deal with refractory fractions. She can teach the knotting of fish-nets and macrinie lace game-bags. She plays the old tune she caught from her grandfather's fife—the cheery air that waked hope amid the sufferings of Valley Forge. She can sing and write for you the words and music of the sequel to "Auld Robin Gray," whose pathetic minor and comforting major live only in the memory. If unable to be one in the crowds that wait on "Pinafore," she studies the score and gets a tolerably clear notion of the quality of the opera that has taken America by storm. She can stone raisins, tie a sash, or help the poor without pauperizing them. She has work or amusement adapted to varying moods, conditions and seasons. In the suppleness of summer she is busy laying out a garden, training and pruning vines, or budding roses. She sets a willow twig or plants a tree for posterity. She cares for bees or fowls, and gathers grapes and flowers. She visits, walks and drives. She rides, too, and goes fishing. Why not? In winter she tends her house-plants or aquarium, raises birds, plays billiards, chess or cards, reads and writes. She composes a quilt from scraps of her children's dresses, each bit telling its story of by-gones, of merry-makers now care-takers, and of childish faces brown and bearded now. Her taste and industry compile the picture and play-house books that help to load the sledge of Santa Claus. From her pigeon-holes she draws obituaries, scraps of science, recipes, remedies, poetry, prose, biographies, genealogical items, bits of family history, and assorting and classifying all, she adds to the home library her volumes of scraps. (The descriptive catalogue of her curios is complete.) In winter, too, she balances her accounts, pays debts, heals differences, revives friendships, reads her pillow-case full of old letters, and makes her will. She approves of labor-saving machines, and the typewriter is her assistant. She cultivates the habit of wise-giving, lends her books, and supervises a young girl's reading. She is an authority in the sick-room, and is in request as advisory and honorary member. She is in full fellowship with the "Association for the Advancement of Women," and promptly pays her dues. She communes with her friends by telephone, has faith in Edison and in the golden age to come. She is content that new methods shall prevail, seeing in them this likeness to the old ways, that they suit the spirit of their time. Like Mrs. Somerville, "she has an immense capacity for enjoying people, scenery, events, everything." Her soul is many-sided, and its windows are all open. She is happy in society and she is happy alone. Without compromise she adapts herself to all, and her company is sought by all. She holds fast her friends, and for slight cause will not let them go. She is strenuous in the observance of holy days and anniversaries. Her Christmas and birth-day cards announce that she lives and remembers. The ageing of the body has not aged her soul. She clasps hands with the young, the eager, the hopeful, and helps them by her experience and is helped by their inexperience. The story of her life is one of magical wonders, where sorrows turned to blessings, where hindrances became helps and discouragements opportunities, where blanks proved prizes, and alas! the heart's longing changed to dust and ashes in the grasp.

She lives fully in the to-day; her moments are not provisional, but all are crises on which hang the surprises of the future. She can say with Horace:

> "Happy the man, and happy he alone,
> He who can call to-day his own;
> He who, secure within, can say,
> 'To-morrow do thy worst, for I have lived to-day.
> Be fair or foul, or rain or shine,
> The joys I have possessed, in spite of Fate, are mine;
> Not Heaven itself upon the past has power,
> But what has been, has been, and I have had my hour.'"

She has learned that patience, thought for others, and a cheerful out-looking may survive the surrender of friendships, hopes and loved ones. In her loneliness she adopts a well-born child and establishes her own hearth-stone, be it never so humble. "If her own yule-log be cold, she is content to sit by others' fire," glad in others' gladness, and making it all her own.

Having lived bravely, if no hospitable door be open for the remnant of her days, she goes bravely to the "Old Ladies' Home," and with no abatement of dignity she eats of the bread she has cast upon the waters.

She passes a just verdict on her life, and takes rightful satisfaction in all that stands to her credit. Though physical infirmities threaten, she is not tired of life, insists that she is still a power; she will not be set aside, nor hasten to meet decrepitude and death.

Certain of an immortality in the permanence of her impress upon the generations to come, and with reverent attitude toward the mystery of death, she turns her face to the wall, and passes, fearing nothing and hoping all things.

SYRACUSE, N. Y.

LEGENDS OF THE INFANCY.

J. C. L.

Dr. Mills tells us how after the weight of ecclesiastical dogmas became too heavy to be borne—all tracing their authority back to the stories of the miraculous birth of Jesus—at length reason resisted the conclusion, refused to accept Christianity on such terms, and felt itself forced to the alternative of finding new meaning for these narratives, or of casting them away.

The English Deists of the last century ridiculed the accounts of Christ's birth as absurd fables. Strauss treated them seriously, but characterized them as myths. Professor Weisse thought they were pious imitations of Grecian legends—framed for the

purpose of ranking Jesus with the heathen gods. Eichhorn regarded them as the spontaneous expressions of a wonder-loving community in an unscientific age. Paulus claimed that if we knew how to interpret this figurative phraseology we should stand on the firm ground of historical unity. Kant said that these supernatural stories were only lessons of morality in disguise; and so far as they pertained to Jesus, were an imaginative description of an ideal humanity, pleasing to God. De Wette thought they were the natural growth of traditions, living for a long time orally—being told from mouth to mouth with additions, and even poetical embellishment. Renan considered them as legendary accounts formed on the model of stories in the Old Testament.

What will inquiry teach us? To begin with, it is noticeable that eight verses in Matthew and thirteen in Luke furnish all the scriptural foundation for all the doctrines built upon the birth of Jesus. Neither Mark nor the "beloved John" make any reference to the miraculous story. Again Matthew speaks of the angelic visitation to Joseph, but says nothing of the revelation to Mary. Luke, however, records the visit of the angel to Mary, and says nothing of the revelation to Joseph.

Then, though Mary and Elizabeth are cousins, and acquainted with each other, and spoke together of their amazing experiences, John the Baptist twice says, "I knew him not." Nor does Jesus ever cite the stupendous facts of his birth, or even allude to them as affording any ground for his claims upon the faith of the people, or for recognition by the Jewish authorities. Nor is there anywhere else in all the gospels any reference to these events, which, if known, would seem to be so momentous in settling many a dispute when his character and mission were called into question.

More suprising still, we have in the Book of Acts accounts of the organization of the first Christian churches. We have the sermons preached by the apostles themselves, with all the argument they can bring in behalf of the new faith, and to prove that Jesus is the Messiah and the Son of God. Besides, we have the epistles sent to the new churches established in different parts of the world, designed to set forth the most remarkable facts or the essential truths of Christianity. Yet in none of these is there any statement of the miraculous conception or birth of Jesus. If such an amazing story as we have in the introduction of two gospels were known and believed, how shall we account for its omission or neglect? Then "this uniform, persistent, and unbroken reticence;" in what strange contrast does it stand with what we find at a later day! Think of the manifold allusions to it in the churches of our day, of its place in the creeds, especially of the use made of it in the Catholic faith! Yet it would seem that never could there have been such need of reiterating the story in all the fullness of its incidents and meaning, as when the church was just beginning its career and the world needed to know every detail of that wonderful history which could serve to advance the claims of Jesus.

But the truth is, the gospels were the last written books of the New Testament. The apostles had no four gospels to read from, when they formed their churches, or to quote when they wrote their epistles. Probably they knew nothing of these marvelous accounts which we are considering. Modern scholarship leads us to believe that the first apostles were all dead before the gospels took the shape in which they have come down to us.

The legends of the infancy are then the product of a past apostolic age. Or if they existed in the time of the apostles, it must have been outside the circle of their labors, or they were judged unworthy of credence. Not yet had they attained to that supreme significance which by-and-by they came to have. The importance of the supernatural birth of Jesus and a habit of constant reference to it was seen when certain doctrines of the God-head were forming in the church. "History tells when it sprung up, and where it sprung up, and how it sprung up, and how it colored the whole stream of Christian thought from that time onwards, and shapes opinions to this day."

OUTLINE FOR A SHORT COURSE OF READING.

M. J. SAVAGE.

In my sermon on "Intellectual Culture," published in *The Times* for March 15th, I spoke of the possibility of all people's reading the great books of the world, however busy they might be. This statement has called out many questions; and the desire has been expressed that I should put my meaning into practical shape. My answer is this brief article. Now, I can do either one of two things:

I. I can give a list of the great writers of the world in all departments. They are only a few. If I remember rightly, Emerson reduces them to nine—including such names as Homer, Aristotle, Plato, Dante, Shakspeare, Goethe, Swedenborg, &c. Every man who claims to be educated must, first or last, become acquainted with these, at least to some extent. But—

II. There is another thing I can do which is more immediately important. Before all things else, one needs to be introduced to, and become acquainted with his own time. We need to get the mental and moral standpoint of the modern world. This, then, is the thing I shall now aim at. I wish to give such a list as any man or woman can read through and understand in the course of two or three years. With such a purpose in mind, I shall give preference to the books that are short and comprehensive. One needs to get the outline first. Special books that treat special subjects more exhaustively can be taken up after vard, as one finds time and inclination. One general direction as to how to read must suffice. A book is not a pill to be simply swallowed. To do any good it must be dissolved in thought. "How do you mix your paints?" said a younger artist to an older one. "With brains, sir!" was the reply. No book is good for much unless mixed with brains. Here,

then, is a list which I would recommend the reading of in order. No ideal perfection is claimed for it. I only say it is a good, and short, simple list for the purpose I have in mind. The general plan of it is, first, to give one an outline idea of the world on which he stands; next, to show the primitive condition of man; then, the steps of his progress; after that, the principles of evolution and Darwinism—the theory of things which is revolutionizing and re-shaping all our modern thought; and lastly, the eligious outlook for the modern world.

THE LIST.

Dana's "The Geological Story Briefly Told."
Clodd's "The Childhood of the World."
Peschel's "The Races of Man."
Hittell's "History of Culture."
Buckley's "Short History of Natural Science."
Spencer's "First Principles."
Schmidt's "Descent and Darwinism."
Clodd's "The Childhood of Religions."
Sunderland's "What is the Bible?"
Arnold's "Literature and Dogma."
Chadwick's "The Bible of To-day."
Spencer's "Principles of Sociology," Vol. I.
Spencer's "Data of Ethics."

As a suggestion and help for those who have read the above books; or who wish to read more widely on some of these topics; or who want to keep on reading when through with these; or, in general, would be glad of a hint as to the names of a few books it would pay them to read, I add here a miscellaneous and

SUPPLEMENTARY LIST.

Lubbock's "Antiquity of Man."
Tylor's "Primitive Culture."
Bonwick's "Egyptian Life and Modern Thought."
Draper's "Intellectual Development of Europe."
Draper's "Conflict of Science and Religion."
Brinton's "Myths of the New World."
Bunce's "Fairy Tales; Origin and Meaning."
Baring-Gould's "Legends of Patriarchs and Prophets."
Baring-Gould's "Curious Myths of the Middle Ages."
Fiske's "Myth and Myth-makers."
Coulange's "The Ancient City."
Maine's "Ancient Law."
Max Muller's "Origin and Development of Religion."
Leckey's "History of Rationalism in Europe."
"The Bible for Learners."
Huxley's "Lay Sermons," etc.
Frothingham's "The Cradle of the Christ."
Anderson's "Norse Mythology."

AVERSIONS.

J. V. B.

We cannot prevent aversions: they are constitutional; but to be fair-minded when we dislike anything is noble. I find this passage in an essay: "In all reformations much is done from passion. When principle will go no further in condemnation, passion takes the business into its own hands. * * * * But there is in the world a great and increasing number who detest not merely Roman illiberality, but all exclusion; who know that liberality means something more than abusing the illiberal." If society is to be rich and many-sided, men must keep both eyes in seeing order: for it is fatal to be blind on the side of us turned towards things not congenial or attractive to us. This ends in total blindness except in one direction. For no man can live with all the things naturally delightful to him on one side, and all the uncongenial matters on the other; but both are on all sides and all about him. If he can see only on one level and in one direction, he is a poor man even in respect of many of the things naturally charming to him. Speaking plainly and exaggerating a little for the sake of constructing a bit of "gnomic wisdom," you may say: "He will see nothing who despises anything."

THE DEACON'S SUNDAY.

HOW HE MANAGES TO MAKE IT PLEASANT FOR HIS CHILDREN.

(By "LAICUS" in the "*Christian Union.*")

"Deacon," said Mr. Hardcap the other night, at one of our after prayer-meeting talks—the parson is insensibly shortening his prayer-meetings and the deacon is insensibly lengthening his conferences—"Deacon, how do you manage to keep your children in order Sunday? My children are just as wild as colts. They just hate Sunday. I have taught 'em the Ten Commandments and the Catechism, and made 'em learn every verse in the Bible that has the word Sabbath in it, and it don't do a bit of good, and I don't know what to do; I really don't."

Humility is not one of Mr. Hardcap's eminent graces—after prayer-meeting; and it was refreshing and hopeful as well as pathetic to hear this confession, for his tone was mournful.

"Well, now," said the deacon, "I used to hate Sunday when I was a boy; and I don't think I was such a very bad boy, either. And I resolved that whatever happened to Sunday, my children should enjoy it, and I really think they do."

"When you 're at home," said the deacon's wife, *sotto voce.*

"What makes you like Sunday, Mr. Hardcap?" asked the deacon.

"W-ell," said Mr. Hardcap, hesitatingly, as though he had never thought of the question before, "that's a kinder hard question to answer. I—I don't exactly know. But I certainly do like it. I would not give it up for any price. You see I get horribly tired of that old carpenter's shop with its everlasting chips; and I tell you I like to turn the key on Saturday night, and say to it, Now, old fellow, there 's no more of you till Monday morning. Then we kinder lay a-bed a little later Sunday morning than other mornings. Hannah, she has to get up pretty early every other day, to get my breakfast and get me off to work betimes, and she kinder likes to take another nap; and I don't much object to it myself, though I don't need it so much as she does. Then we have our morning baths, and get on our best clothes; and for a man that has been in his overalls all the week, it 's kinder nice to dress up a little different. And we take our breakfast leisurely, and eat a little more, maybe; at all events, there 's no hurry and flurry. And then I get an hour to read my religious paper and my—and the Bible, of course. And then we go to church, and I see my neighbors; that and Wednesday evening is pretty much all the chance I get, and I like that.

Then, of course, there is the sermon and the worship, and all that sort of thing, beside. And then, when the children are n't too nisy, I generally get a nap in the afternoon. And, altogether, I would n't live in France, where, they tell me, men go right on with their work as other days, for any consideration. Money would not hire me."

"Well, now," said the deacon, "what makes you and your wife like Sunday, and look for it and be sorry when it 's gone, is that it gives a chance for rest. You are hard at work all the week ; you have all sorts of worries and cares ; you lock them all up in your shop till Monday ; and the day that permits you to do this is a boon."

"That 's about it," said Mr. Hardcap.

"Now," continued the deacon, "your children don't want rest. They are not tired. They have n't got any cares and worries to lock up in their shop. They are not making chips. They are all full and boiling over with vitality. They are chock full of steam, and when you stop the machinery it hisses and sizzles at every joint."

"And that 's a fact," said Mr. Hardcap, emphatically.

"If they 're like my children," said the deacon, "they may lie a-bed later Sunday morning, but I don't believe they take an extra nap."

"I wish they did," said Mr. Hardcap. "Some mornings they raise such a racket that I cannot get mine."

"What are you going to do about it?" said Mr. Geer. "Don't you believe in Sunday for children?"

"In the first place," said the deacon, "I recognize the fact that they don't need the rest. At least, they don't know that they do ; so I don't blame them for being a little reckless and obstreperous. I try to keep them quiet for the sake of other people, but not for their own, nor for the Lord's. If I tell them Sunday m rning that their mother is trying to get a nap, they will generally try to keep quiet. But I don't say, 'Hush ! it 's Sunday.' I say, 'Hush ! your mother 's asleep.' I think it unfortunate that Sunday follows a holiday. I should like to try the experiment of putting the holiday in the middle of the week, and making Saturday the busiest day of all. I fancy they would be very ready to welcome a change."

"That 's an idea," said Mr. Hardcap.

"Then, in the second place," said the deacon, "I make it a father's day. All the week the children have their mother, and very little of me. Sunday I try to give them father and very little of mother. We breakfast late, but one rule is, to be all dressed for church at breakfast. After breakfast, I sit down with them and study the Sunday-school lesson. Sometimes Ma joins us, but not very often. We all study together, Tot on my knee. She is rather restless, and something of an interruption. But she would think it was dreadful to be put off without her lesson.

"Then in the afternoon they pretty regularly play church. They get out the library steps for a pulpit. Lucy plays the piano. They take turns at preaching. I observe that they are not Presbyterians, for Tot takes her turn at the pulpit, and is quite as eloquent as any of them. Pete generally succeeds in reproducing something of the sermon of the morning or of the Sunday-School lesson. That makes him more attentive to both. They pass round the contribution-box, and when Ma or I are there we put in some pennies, which go into their savings-bank."

"Ain't you kind of afraid of their making fun of church ?' asked Mr. Hardcap.

"Not at all," said the deacon. "They are just as serious and reverential as you and I are. However, I don't suppose I should set them at it. They are setting themselves at it, and I have encouraged them."

"I keep Noah's ark for the little children," said Mr. Geer. "I don't let them have it any other days."

"That 's a good plan," said the deacon. "Ma has for ours a Sunday scrap-book. Anything for Sunday that is attractive ; that they can't do on other days ; so you don't always have to be saying, 'You must not, you must not, you must not ; but sometimes you may.' Then summer days I generally take them to walk in the afternoon ; after they are through with their church and I am through with my nap. In the winter we have a reading circle. I have read through Pilgrim's Progress twice, and two volumes of Dr. Newton's sermons. Then in the evening I never go to a church."

"What, never ?" whispered Jennie Plainfield, who had been to "Pinafore" the week before.

"Well, hardly ever," said the deacon, good-humoredly. I wonder if he, the deacon ! had been to "Pinafore" too. "We go from the tea-table to the parlor and have a sing. Every one, from the oldest to the youngest, selects a hymn. Sometimes I think the older children get a little tired of singing 'Pull for the shore,' which is invariably Tot's selection ; but Tot never gets tired. And I do believe that Sunday is the best day in all the week for Tot."

"But I should think that you 'd be tired out, deacon," said Mr. Hardcap.

"Well, no," said the deacon ; "you see I am very fond of children. They rest me."

And that, I guess, is, after all, the secret of the deacon's success with his Sunday. For naturally the children are very fond of the deacon.

CONFERENCE AT KEOKUK.

The recent Conference at Keokuk was a spiritual and intellectual feast to all who were so fortunate as to be present. The full, rich, stimulating programme was carried out with but one failure. A special feature was the two papers by Laymen. Mr. S. M. Clark, editor of the *Gate City*, improved the occasion to give the criticism of the pens upon the ministrations of the pulpit in this year of our Lord, 1879. Mr. Clark's paper was clear and scholarly, itself an index of the wide divergence between the thought of the editor in his sanctum, with his eye on the turbulence of the political world, and that of the minister in his study, intent only on catching the voice of Truth and of interpreting it to his people. The discussion which followed, so full of good nature, would not have been possible save in a *Liberal Conference* where Freedom and Fellowship sat supreme. The other voice from the

Laity was a thoughtful paper from Mr. Lamson, of Fairfield, on *Self-Worship*. He had so long been accustomed to regard himself as an outsider,—a solitary thinker,—not expecting sympathy from any church organization, that the spirit of freedom and the warm, sympathetic glow which pervaded this Conference were a revelation to him, and it was delightful to see, first, the responsive sparks from his face, and then the warm flame right from his kindled heart, which at last sent out $100 to aid in our State work.

During the Conference $512 was subscribed for the work of the current year. And so a new impetus was given to the Association, and we trust also that the Keokuk Society will feel more than heretofore the *nobility* of *being*, and the true grandeur of the faith for which a Liberal Church stands.

A fraternal letter of greeting was read from Rabbi Sonneschein, of St. Louis; and Rabbi Bogen, of Keokuk, participated in the discussion in a friendly way. Keokuk proved a most opportune point for a Conference, for it brought to our assistance not only Mr. Blake, of Quincy, with his inspiring presence, but, for the first time, all the sunshine that glows in Mr. Snyder's soul, which he poured out for the benefit of the little ones. The two sermons from Bros. Effinger and Herbert, were strong and uplifting, all the papers exceptionally good, and the whole Conference a *renewal*. The following resolution was passed:

"*Resolved*. That we have heard with pleasure of the increasing prosperity of Humbolt College, and of the Society of Independent Christians at Humbolt village; that we extend to both College and Society our sympathy and congratulations and our hearty wishes for their abundant success."

It was also resolved to hold the next annual meeting of the Association with the friends at Humbolt. C. T. C.

THE WISCONSIN CONFERENCE.

The Wisconsin Conference of Unitarian and Independent Societies will hold its annual meeting with the Unitarian Church, at Kenosha, December 9th, 10th and 11th, 1879, commencing Tuesday evening, December 9th. It is expected that Rev. Brooke Herford, of Chicago; Revs. W. R. Alger and J. L. Dudley, late of Boston; Rev. Messrs. Herbert, Kerr and Forbush, of Illinois; and Rev. Messrs. Simmons, Jones, Gordon and others, of Wisconsin, will participate in the meeting. Programmes will be issued soon. Kenosha offers hospitalities. The Chicago & Northwestern and Milwaukee & St. Paul Railways will return delegates at one-fifth fare. Please extend this notice, with invitation, to others.

In behalf of the Conference,

WM. C. WRIGHT, Secretary.

MADISON, Wis., Nov. 20, 1879.

A Boston correspondent of the New York *Tribune* writes: "First and last, there has been much discussion in private and in the newspapers as to the authorship of certain other articles in *The Atlantic* within the past year and a half—I mean the series which began with that notable paper on 'Certain Dangerous Tendencies in American Life,' and includes the quaintly-titled essay on 'Sincere Demagogy' in the number for the present month. Take my word again that the writer of these papers, and of others to come next year, is the Rev. J. B. Harrison. He is a gentleman somewhere about fifty years of age, formerly a resident of Vineland, N. J., for the last few years living at Franklin Falls, N. H. He is now in full fellowship with the Unitarian denomination, though I understand he began his ministerial life as a Methodist."

THE CATHEDRAL.

W. C. G.

Shelf over shelf the mountain rose,
And, as we climbed, they seemed the stair
That scales a minster's wall to seek
Some high-hid cell of prayer.

But every stair was carpeted
With mosses soft of grey and green,
And gold and crimson arabesques
Trailed in and out between.

Up, up, o'er ferny pavements still
And dim mosaics of the wood
We trod, by rocky balustrades,
Till on the heights we stood.

Niched in the mighty minster we!
The silent wildernesses clung
About the ancient mountain-walls:
The clouds their shadows flung

For solemn frescoes; far below
The shimmer of a forest-floor,
A leafy brightness like the sea
Wide twinkling o'er and o'er.

High over all the dome of blue,
Where misty bars of sunlight streamed;
Cathedral-hush on every side:
Nature at worship seemed!

There came wild music on the winds,
The chanting of the forest choir,
Shaken across the ranged hills
As over a chorded lyre.

Then pauses as for quiet prayer,
And lulls in which the listeners heard
Home-voices speak, while faces neared
Swifter than any bird.

Of strength eternal, by whose will
The hills their steadfast places keep,
Whose Right is as the mountains great,
Whose Justice is a deep,—

In grand old Bible verse we spake;
And following close, like echoes, sped
The poems best beloved. The words
Along the silence fled,

The Silence, awful unhushed Word,
Behind all sound, behind all thought!
Throbbing with voices yet unborn,
With vanished voices fraught!

It spake to soul,—or if to sense,
To sense all strangely blent with sense;
The vision took majestic rhythm,—
We *heard* the firmaments!

And listened, time and space forgot,
As flowed the lesson for the day,—
"Order is Beauty; Law is Love;
Childlike his worlds obey."

And all the heaven seemed folding down
Above the shining earth's sweet face,—
Till in our hearts they touched! *We* felt
The thrill of that embrace.

Then, in its peace, we wandered down
Our rocky stair-case from the height;
On dim mosaics of the wood,
We met the climbing Night.

SUNDAY ON BALD CAP, SHELBORNE, Sept., 1876.

NOTES FROM THE FIELD.

J. LL. J.

"What news abroad i' the world?"

INDIA.—Madame Blavatsky, author of "Isis Unveiled," publishes *The Theosophist*, a monthly journal devoted to oriental philosophy, literature, art and occultism at Bombay.

MEMPHIS, TENN.—A young lady renounced Christianity and espoused Judaism the other day. The following was her confession of faith: "Hear, O Israel, the Lord is our God, the Lord is one."

RUSSIA.—The Jews in the Don Cossack territory have received orders to receive the territory within ten years. *Unity* has no subscribers in Russia, or else this bad matter might have been bettered.

CHICAGO, ILL.—A Baptist church in the city has a "Bryant Literary Society."—*The Interior* would have ministers profit by the sad experience of Dr. Lorimer, who, in a moment of self-forgetfulness, used another man's sermon,—and not read such matter as would tempt them to "crib." The *Northwestern Christian Advocate* wonders if it is not equally dangerous to listen to sermons.

STOUGHTON, WIS.—The Universalists held their second Quarterly Conference at this place, Nov. 18–21. A full programme was accurately and promptly carried out. Mrs. Olympie Brown Willis, of Racine, opening, Mrs. Antoinette Brown Blackwell speaking the second night, and Mrs. Jones, the right hand of this jotter, reading a paper on the Religion of the Poets, were perhaps indicative of the coming tide.

"GOOD TIMES."—No. III., Vol. 3, of this original monthly, edited by Mrs. Slade, of Fall River, Mass., and published by T. W. Bicknell, 16 Hawley street, Boston, is before us, and contains an amount of available matter for recitations, dialogues, &c., sufficient to make us almost wish we were a boy again, that we might speak pieces. Sunday-Schools looking for concert exercises suitable for Christmas and other special services, can find no source more fruitful than a file of this magazine. Single copies, 15 cents; $1 per year.

CONCORD, MICH.—An interesting hint of how the spirit of mutual helpfulness is embodying itself in tangible links comes to us from this place in the shape of *Our Reporter*, Vol. 1, No. 1, a paper devoted to the interests of the blind, owned and edited by a blind man, Mr. A. M. Shotwell, a gentleman whom it is our privilege to know well as one who combines integrity, intelligence, independence and liberality, sufficient to promise well for the new organ. The present number is a handsome sheet, containing matter which must be of great interest to the blind and their friends. Any of our readers will do well to call the attention of their blind friends to this paper. Subscription price, 50 cents per year.

QUINCY, ILL.—The scattered but goodly fellowship of the Liberal ministry in the West will suffer with us in a sense of personal loss in the death of Mrs. R. S. Benneson, which occurred on the 14th inst. A most loyal mother in our Israel has gone to her reward. Her home has, for over a quarter of a century, been the asylum of the missionary of the Liberal faith. Though unordained by outward form, she herself was a noble minister, strong of head and warm of heart. For many years she was superintendent of our Sunday-School at Quincy. Much of the time during her administration it was the leading school in the West. In the Western Conference and the Western Unitarian Sunday-School Society, of which she was at one time Vice-President, she took most cordial interest. Children and grand-children have grown up around her to call her memory blessed. She remains as a helpful memory in their lives and ours, ever to "make our faith in goodness strong."

WOBURN, MASS.—George H. Young was installed over the First Parish on the 19th inst., eight clerical brethren taking part,—more ministers than are necessary to run a State Conference in the Mississippi Valley. Fresh from the orange groves of Santa Barbara, we have no doubt but what Bro. Young will be able to preach and practice the West-Easterly gospel of Liberal thought that will justify the following from E. A. Horton's hymn, written for the occasion:

"The plaintive cry of woe shall wake
Responses in Thy breast;
The prayers of trampled human kind
Be by Thy efforts blest;
The ardent hopes of pure reform,
In timid ranks displayed,
Shall through Thy glowing word and deed,
Be potently arrayed."

HAMILTON, ILL.—Miss Safford reports her work here as follows: "With the usual congregations numbering from one hundred and fifty to two hundred, the work at Hamilton continues to prosper. The Unity Club is giving a series of lectures and literary and dramatic entertainments, that are proving very successful. Rev. J. Vila Blake, of Quincy, gave the first lecture of the course, and Unity Club is grateful to him, not only for the literary treat enjoyed, but also for the kindly sympathy which he manifests at all times with the Hamilton workers in the Unitarian cause. The services eight miles out of town are continued, and the little country church is crowded to overflowing with those who come from six, eight and ten miles away, that they may listen to liberal preaching. They are ready to organize a Unity Church, and as we view the fields unoccupied, we long for Unitarian circuit-riders."

BELFAST, ME.—The Unitarian Society at this place have been having a two-day fair, with "Juvenile Continentals," a comedy and operatta, fancy articles for sale, and a silk quilt drawn for. We are glad that there was $290 to go on parsonage account. We are content that No. 7 should have drawn the quilt, but is there not need of a word of caution here, lest others in an unwary moment be tempted to go and do likewise. Concentrating energies on tidies and patchwork that might have been directed towards literary and humane interests, extracting by cunning the dollar out of the husband's pocket, ninety cents of which goes to pay for oysters, hall and gaslight, ten cents of it into the church treasury, thus losing the opportunity of receiving the $5 which he might have been willing to give in direct support of a worthy cause, providing his wife had not already purloined from his pantry, neglected his fireside, and probably increased his doctor bill in an attempt to advance the cause of religion by entering the lists of restauranteurs. Above all, the word of caution should be said lest a moral confusion may grow out of the nice distinction between religious lottery and secular gambling. The cheapest way to support a church is the straight way: direct taxation brings surest revenue.

CONFERENCES.—It were well for the readers of *Unity* if another hand noted the Conferences which for the last two

weeks have absorbed the time, and drained the vitality of the jotter.

At Keokuk the entire programme was realized with the exception of one Essay. Herbert pictured the coming church to open with, and after two days of intense intellectual and social interest, when the goodly company gathered at the delightful home of Secy. McCrary, the company felt as though Herbert's church was more than half realized. The exceptional excellency of this Conference is found in the fact, that it stood not only for words but for work. There was a smile of incredulity visible when the motion of Bro. Cole was carried the first morning, to raise $2,000, in the State of Iowa for missionary work by the 1st of June next, but a smile of another kind was visible as we passed over the information that nearly $600 of it had already been raised. Dreary rides across the distances, a Sunday's preaching for Bro. Chainey, a Monday night lecture at Boonville, were the preparation for the Indiana Conference. Snyder, of St. Louis, Crooker, Chainey and Jones conferred for two days. The Conference was put on a membership basis, and more good things said and felt than can be reported. Of the fields and work of these two Conferences we hope to speak more fully in our next. Meanwhile, the Wisconsin Conference, the last of the season, convenes at Kenosha, Dec. 9th–11th, Rev. Brooke Herford preaching the opening sermon, and a goodly list to follow.

Emancipation Celebration.—Unity Church, Chicago, held a jubilee on the evening of the 17th over the payment of the debt of $30,000, which has hung over the society since the rebuilding. S. S. Greeley read a historical sketch of the church, saying many handsome things of the noble work and still nobler workers of Unity, not the least deserving of which are the faithful trustees, who have brought about this consummation in the face of the society's first great bereavement, the loss of its first and only pastor. Said the essayist:

"We have met to-night to celebrate our emancipation from the thralldom of debt. Our mortgages are released, our notes are canceled, and no man can lay a creditor's hand upon this property, which now first really belongs to that service to which we undertook to dedicate it ten years ago.

"For this let us again rejoice and give thanks. But may we venture to declare that we still owe a debt as sacred as that just paid? Its evidences are recorded only in the registry of deeds of grace and good will. Many of our creditors are unknown to us, and all are beyond the reach of individual repayment.

"But we shall never earn the world's receipt in full, nor the quittance of our own consciences, *till we have freely given in some form or other to the common cause,* which we and our Eastern benefactors hold dear, the full amount which they contributed in our disaster to rebuild Unity Church."

The italics are our own, because we know that Bro. Greeley meant to put it strong, and we believe also that Unity Church will bear him out in the pledge. Congratulatory speeches were also made by Revs. Alger, Herford and Wendte, who came all the way from Cincinnati to the rejoicing.

Brothers and Sisters of Unity, all the pillars of our "Unity" are made glad in your triumph, and extend congratulations.

The General Convention of Universalists was held this year at Minneapolis, Oct. 21–24. It was like holding a council of war upon the picket line, but the General came from the East, and the frontier men and women were ready with a western welcome. Two signs are growing visible in the Universalist body: 1—A sense of organic Unity: "It is only for nine years," say the trustees in their annual report, "that we have lived under an ecclesiastical policy which is capable of organizing and concentrating our strength; but already this system, which was at first received with distrust and some dislike, finds cordial assent far and near." 2—Evangelicalism: "It is certain that there is steadily growing in the Universalist church a more definite consciousness of our dependence, individually and as a church, in the person of the living Savior, Jesus Christ, the same yesterday, to-day and forever." The denomination is happy in believing that its original mission is nearing its accomplishment: "We find each year less and less need to stand for that great truth which gave us our name, because the fullness of the time seems come for that truth to exert itself in all the churches." Henceforth its reason for existence is rather to make it the great church, "the best presentment of the largest liberty of understanding, utterly indifferent to venerable error, with the most fervent and loyal devotion to the person of Christ." Whether the Universalist Sunday Schools were doing the best work possible in following, lesson by lesson, the Bible-paths selected by the engineers of the orthodox International Lesson Series, was discussed, but left unsettled for another year. And the same fate befell the proposal to amend the Winchester confession by substituting *bring* or *lead* for *restore* in the article about universal salvation. So even this little creed needs change within seventy-five years to make it true to the time. In the courteous debate about the matter it was odd to remember what churches had been split and martyr-fires kindled and battles fought in the old days of Christendom over just such points as the difference between "bring" and "lead."

The Universalist Women.—The most suggestive thing in the Universalist convention, lately held at Minneapolis, was the report of the Woman's Centenary Association. It shows what some earnest women have done within ten years in the cause of the church they love. We quote from the words of the President, Mrs. E. A. Soule: "If there be any with you now, at this meeting, who were with us in the vestry of the Universalist church, in Buffalo, N. Y., in September, 1869, I hope they will tell you of that little gathering of women then and there—the first national gathering of Universalist women. How timid, and yet how hopeful we were! How used to associate work, and yet how full of faith that we *could* work together and accomplish our grand purpose. * * * We were organized first as an auxiliary to the General Convention, to help raise the Murray Fund—that noble sum that was to commemorate forever the birth of Universalism in America. Nobly did we do that work, enrolling on our lists the names of 13,000 Universalist women, and placing in the hands of the Treasurer of the General Convention $35,000 as our contribution to the memorial fund. * * *

Then came re-organization as independent workers—or, rather, joint workers with the General Convention for Universalism in general. And then some sharp battles, which we do not care to remember—those few of us who had to do the fighting,—and then a sweet peace when we had liberty to work as the great sisterhood of the church. And now, I am glad and proud to say that, of all that we undertook to do, we have failed in nothing. Our general purpose was to help and advance Universalism, wherever the opportunity offered. Our special purposes were several. One of them was to start a Publication Fund and issue tracts that should be scattered world-wide. This we have done, over two million pages having already been sent abroad on their bright mis-

sion, only the beginning of a seed-sowing whose harvest will be the regeneration of "all souls." Another special purpose was to assist our colleges and institutions of learning. Our Treasurer can point to you on her books the large sums we have raised and handed over to our denominational schools. Another was to assist churches in raising money to defray their debts, and assist also in the building of new houses of worship. This, too, we have done. Another was to help struggling Sunday Schools and struggling parishes, which also we have done. Another, to aid worthy young people in their efforts to obtain a theological education, which also we have done. Another, to help sick, aged and indigent ministers, and their widows and orphans, which also we have done. Another was to help our Home Missions, which also we have done. Another, to distribute our literature in home and foreign lands, which also we have done to an almost incredible amount; within the last sixteen months over ten barrels, solidly packed, having been distributed in Scotland alone. Another was to do foreign missionary work, which also we have done. In May, 1874, we started foreign missionary work in Scotland, and in May, 1878, sent out our first foreign missionary.

"In 1873 we became an incorporated association, getting our charter from the District of Columbia.

"During all these ten years we have *never* been in debt, and *never* failed to meet an obligation when it became due."

FITCHBURG, MASS.—A recent number of *The Sentinel* contains a lengthy communication from Rev. S. J. Stewart, in reply to a petition signed by 230 people asking him to withdraw his resignation as pastor of the Congregationalist Church. Recognizing that the large majority of his hearers are in full sympathy with him in his progressive views of religion, yet remembering the rights of the conservative few who represent the historic church, he, with commendable conscientiousness, persists in his resignation. He joins with Frederic W. Robertson in saying, "Is it not melancholy that the popular religion is at once devotional, slanderous, timid, gossiping, narrow, shrieking and prudish?" Yet he clearly sees that "It is not possible for me to patch up a theological compromise that will suit ultra-Calvinists on the one hand and Christian rationalists on the other." * * * * There are temptations to yield to one of two errors now in the so-called orthodox church, either one of which seems dangerous to the truth. One of those errors is the attempt to base new sentiments and practical beliefs upon old theology. Men know perfectly well that ideas have changed on many questions, but with a wonderful idolatry for old words they attempt to base new conclusions upon old premises, rather than to change the premises. * * * * Now it is utterly impossible to base these new ideas upon an old theology. Moreover, it is not fair to take the very heart of the old theology and still try to make men believe it is the original faith. Yet I find myself constantly expected to place practical ideas and sentiments which men *do* like, upon an old theology which they suppose they *ought* to like, but which is really antagonistic. * * * * The other error to which I am sometimes urged is the attempt to avoid touching the traditional theories of men by ignoring theology entirely. This error has so crept into so-called Orthodox churches that we can seldom hear any clear-cut distinct system of faith or morals. There are a great many fulsome eulogies on Jesus, and many condemnations of modern heretics, but there is seldom any attempt to define what Jesus is to men, or what is exact orthodoxy. Preachers sometimes try to hide their disbelief in some old theory of God, or life, by doing without a theology. They are often tempted to preach beautiful things about religion or morals without starting from any fundamental principle. But it is like the attempt to build a house without foundations. No man can preach long with any meaning unless he has some clearly defined theory of God and life and morality. All practical conclusions must be based upon some theory or philosophy. That philosophy ought not to be imposed as a dogmatic system on others, but must be the foundation of all earnest and lasting teaching in the soul of the preacher. The common impression that modern progressive preachers who seem to impress their fellows have no theology is very erroneous. They do not build on old dogmas, but they do have clear and positive ideas about essentials, and it is this very fact that makes their words impressive. * * * * The heart of the new humanity, with its sentiment and its new conceptions of the worth of man, is aching for a better philosophy of God and life. The old church is too often away from the seething, rushing stream of human life and thought. It goes through its forms, and repeats its creeds with half-heartedness, and seems not to realize that the stream of thought, and science, and belief, and life, has found another channel far away. If the church would reach men, she must come down to men; she must build herself close beside the stream of humanity if she would feel any life currents." We can but admire the moral insight found throughout the paper, and extend our fellowship to the brave brother.

CHRISTMAS GIFT.

In buying the things for your Christmas Tree, at home or in the Sunday-School, remember the pretty "Infant Class Cards" advertised on our last page. In giving the new package (C), you give a little gallery of pictures, besides the twelve verses for Mamma and Sister to teach the children week by week,—the verses fitting the pictures.

"The Rev. Dr. David Einhorn, the venerable Jewish Rabbi who recently died in New York, is deserving of honorable mention, not only for his great learning, but for the moral courage which he exhibited in defending his anti-slavery opinions while in charge of a congregation in Baltimore. When the civil war broke out, Dr. Einhorn, who was a strong Unionist, was obliged to leave that city. It was thought that he might have been in danger of popular violence if a number of young men attached to him had not, fully armed, guarded his house. Dr. Einhorn was also a strong advocate of Jewish reform."

The *Indian Mirror* prints the following as the words of an orthodox minister: "My brethren, we may, probably, often have been struck with surprise at the many apparent virtues and graces of conduct, with sentiments that seem to be spiritual, in those who are called Unitarians; and, indeed, it might seem that they are, on the whole, *better* men than those who have an orthodox creed; but we must believe that Satan, the prince of liars, in order to deceive the very elect, purposely *suspends and lessens his temptations* in their case, so as to produce the semblance of virtue and religion, which cannot possibly exist in them while they are denying the Lord that bought them."

"In things essential, unity; in things doubtful, liberty; in all things, charity.

"Where charity is, there doth God reside. Possess charity and you will see Him in your own heart, seated as on His throne."—*St. Augustine.*

The London *Echo*, speaking of Dr. Talmage agreeing to lecture for one price, and then charging another, says: "King David once asked, 'Lord, who shall abide in thy tabernacle?' and He answered, 'He that sweareth to his own hurt, and changeth not.' The man that abides in the Brooklyn Tabernacle is not one of that sort."

The *Independent* has a story of "a clergyman in clerical outline, in the Zulu war, hard at work handing out cartridges to the men, and he did it with a will. A private near was taking shots at the Zulus, and cursing the while in the most ingenious manner. 'Don't swear, man!' shouted the clergyman; 'don't swear at them! Shoot them!'"

What is to become of the doctrine of plenary inspiration, when the *Independent* has an article on "Superficial Falsehoods in the Gospels," arguing that there must be such from the imperfections of language. Worse yet, when the *American Baptist* retorts that "there are no falsehoods, superficial or otherwise, in the Bible," the *Independent* quotes the sentence and coolly adds: "We despair of sending a ray of light into such darkness."

The *Northwestern Christian Advocate* has discovered this way to get religious consolation out of Col. Ingersoll. After justly praising his speech at the Grant banquet in Chicago, in which "he made a grand plea for liberty and poured out his soul in healthful indignation against those who enslaved their kind," it adds: "What an ambassador he might be in behalf of the revealed truth he so impotently scorns, yet he now serves to cast an illuminating light upon the religion that affords to do without him."

Among the signs of growing unity, we may notice this act of Dr. E. L. Magoon, a Baptist minister of Philadelphia: "The Rev. Chauncey Giles, of the Swedenborgian Church, a few days ago was denied the use of the hall of the Young Men's Christian Association in Philadelphia, on the ground that the Swedenborgians were outside of the Evangelical church. When Dr. Magoon heard of this, he called on Mr. Giles, although he had never met him, and offered him the use of his own church. The following letter, in which this offer was made in writing, has been published: 'The Rev. Chauncey Giles—My Dear Fellow-sinner: If you wish, my pulpit is at your command for next Sunday night, to teach any truths you may honestly believe.'"

"Col. Higginson points out three important steps which have been taken within a single year in Massachusetts—all recognizing the changed position of women: first, the passage of the School-Suffrage Law; second, the admission of women to full membership of the Medical Society—a thing which ten years ago would have seemed incredible; third, the admission of women to Harvard College. Twenty-five young women are now, he says, 'peacefully studying in Cambridge in a course identical to all intents and purposes with the Harvard undergraduate course, under the same professors, with the same text-books, methods and facilities, and wanting absolutely nothing but the appearance of their names on the college catalogue and the promise of a formal diploma.'"—*American Socialist.*

Of Leonard Montefiore, the young Jewish writer who recently died in this country, where he had come "to advance his political education," Mr. Smalley writes: "He belonged to a race which is steadily enlarging its share in English public life, and to one of the most ancient and honorable families of that race. The name of his father's uncle, Sir Moses Montefiore, is known the world over, and Sir Francis Goldsmid, his uncle on the other side, was hardly less distinguished. The Montefiores and Goldsmids are of that aristocracy which owes its distinction in part to ancient lineage and great wealth, but still more to the splendor of their charities and their pure life. Among all the Jewish people in England, there was, I suppose, no young man who had such a start in life as Leonard Montefiore. Many of the best traditions of his family were personified in him. I once heard an Oxford Don say that Montefiore was one of the few men who talked well on all subjects. He had applied himself eagerly to literature and politics, and in politics especially to German politics. Like most young men who have much stuff in them, he took radical views of public life. He had a passionate love of liberty, and a passionate hatred, not of tyranny merely, as one writer remarks, but of every form of authority which he deemed excessive, and every limitation of freedom to his mind not absolutely necessary. In his love for Germany this led him to set greater store by the freedom of the individual German than by the political union of the German States. His articles in *The Nineteenth Century*, on Liberty in Germany, were saturated with this feeling—this last article not less than the others; and so were his letters from Berlin to *The Times*, which made their mark at once."

The *Christian Register* thinks J. B. Harrison is wrong in calling himself a pessimist, and says: "The fact that he, and others like him, can so cheerfully write themselves down as 'pessimists,' indicates an encouraging state of affairs. A pessimist who can see and denounce the evil tendencies of our time; who, after surveying the ground, and noting all the mischievous influences at work among the people, can still go to work with an assurance that work will count, and that there is no mischief yet done, or likely to be done, which cannot be neutralized and displaced by the good—may call himself what he pleases. His pessimism is our optimism." Among the signs that good is prevailing, the *Register* gives the following: "The social advantages offered to the common people have in all civilized countries been increased. The comforts accessible to the laboring classes have been multiplied. The lower half of society has become aware of the inequality of conditions, has learned that ignorance and poverty are not permanent disabilities, and has become restive under unjust burdens. At the same time, enlightened and prosperous men and women take an interest in the struggles of the poor hitherto unprecedented. The 'revolt of labor' and the sympathy which that revolt inspires are signs of cheerful import. Taking society at large, social life is more pure. Public sentiment condemns unsparingly that which in the days of George IV. was unnoticed. Autocratic and tyrannical forms of government have been modified or abolished, and are coming more and more under the control of a public opinion, which stands strongly for justice, and is itself a modern product. Human rights are recognized more generally than ever before."

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WESTERN UNITARIAN CONFERENCE.

BASIS OF FELLOWSHIP.

Whereas, We feel the great need of rallying the Liberal minds of the West around one common centre; therefore,

Resolved, That the Western Unitarian Conference conditions its fellowship on no dogmatic tests, but welcomes all thereto who desire to work with it in advancing the Kingdom of God. (Adopted at Chicago, May 14, 1875.)

Editor of Unity: Please acknowledge receipt of recent contributions to the Western Unitarian Conference from

1st Independent Congregational Society at Meadville, per Rev. Mr. Bixby, - - - - - - $40 00
Unity Church of St. Louis, per Rev. J. C. Learned, 40 00
Unity Church of St. Paul, per Rev. W. C. Gannett, 100 00

The first of January is near at hand, by which time it was requested at the last Conference that the contributions should be paid. The arrears are not so heavy as in some former years, but with the great revival of trade so much talked of, cannot we create a revival of interest in Western missionary work through the agency of our own creation? Will not the friends, both lay and reverend, give this matter prompt attention? Yours truly, Joseph Shippen, Treasurer.

St. Louis, Mo., Nov. 28, 1879.

WEST. UNIT. SUNDAY-SCHOOL SOCIETY.

The Rules to make Home Pleasant, referred to in Unity of July 15th, are now ready. They are printed on heavy tinted paper, and are designed for home-walls where there are children. Price 30 cents per doz. or 5 cents per copy

Unity Services and Songs for Sunday Schools by J. Vila Blake, single copies, 25 cents; per doz, $2.00; per 100, $10.00; manilla edition, plainer, but more durable, per 100, $8.00.

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